

BILL ON THE PAST

He Writes of South Carolina, New Jersey and Socrates.

HISTORY OF A CALLOW BIRDIE

That Has Recently Come to an Unusually Early End—From a Poem of New Jersey.

Copyright, 1903, by Edgar W. Nye. I have been in South Carolina for a time to see how the new liquor law is carried out. Where I am it is carried out most every day, together with from six or eight grogshops, men who can no longer think past a given point.



A PROPERTY WATERMELON.

A New York man who makes property watermelons with waterproof linings has supplied 250,000 to this section. These watermelons, I find, are like a great rock in a weary land.

I have written four times to Governor Tillman to inquire if he would be open on Sunday, but so far have received no reply.

At the same time I sent him a receipt for spoons and the option on nine acres of mint growing on my place.

Muskateer comes out of the river of nights and ate my corn this year, and my shoes are worn, and broken, and the sun is hid from me at times, but behind the clouds there is a low priced lining of coin silver quod ad. 25 cents, for in the valley in my North Carolina home, there are nine acres of mint waving in the wind.

Tomorrow I will go home. To think that South Carolina, the home of a proud people, a people whose governor once said to the governor of North Carolina that time was dragging between drinks, should now be forced to drink out of the governor's jug or not at all is a bit.

I have been making some mathematical calculations after visiting Kansas, Iowa, Maine, South Carolina and other states which claim to have throttled the rum power, and find after covering Fanning's bridge with figures that the rum used in swilling the law in those states would make a middle sized planet two miles in two seconds.

But let us pass on.

I have missed recently from my desk a literary publication that came to me all the spring. It was started not many months ago with the following salutatory:

A callow birdie nestles among you, its undeveloped wings eager for flight, eager to penetrate the mysteries of the bright, far-off canopy of life and reveal the dreamed-of beauties of the wide, wide world. Whispering faith and hope in each word breath, what shall be its fate? Shall it follow the path of the eagle, or will it seek refuge in some alien woodland, there to waste its life in early death, unloved, forgotten and alone?

Can it be that it has been cast out?

Oh, I hope not.

I once knew a callow birdie like that, before its eyes were open, to hold the mouth ajar for worms all day at the edge of its cunning little nest, and one day while its eyes were closed and its mouth open a large and pizen yellow jacket came along and stung the glottis of the callow birdie, and it never sang any more.

Alas, there, birdie!

See that your eyes are open a good deal of the time and your mouth shut.

Gilly Pol of South Mercey, N. J., talks in a nice letter, and a school teacher if I would mind writing to her something of the zoology of New Jersey for her scrapbook.

The flora and fauna of New Jersey are well worthy the attention of the careful student. She not only leads the Union in the peach, pear and small fruit industry, but counts among her successful tropical fruits the Ben Davis pumpkin and the burglar proof Mother Hubbard squash.

The zoology of New Jersey gives the thinking mind much to think about, and what is more pleasing to the thinking mind than to have something to think about? Dr. C. G. Abbott has catalogued many mammals aside from the mosquito which belong to New Jersey. Among them are seven species of bats, exclusive of those found at the clubs. Dr. Abbott names five varieties of moles, myother of whom one, however, several varieties of shrews who do sing; the wildcat, now very rare, a red and a gray fox.

Of the mammiferous there are the fisher, weasel or stoat, mink, otter and skunk. The latter wings his way as far north in summer as Woodstock, but at autumn time, when the crocus candy on the coast of Park road and Broadway has by means of exports turned to chocolate morsels, when the maple sugar from New Orleans has been put back on the shelves to wait for another spring and the crocus candy has turned to gold, when the hawk lands put big green bags on their backs and begin to sell chestnuts on the street, when the hand organ man wraps his cornucopia and monkey in red flannel and goes forth buying sea-bird bottles and reconstituting bats, the glad thrill of the skunk's night song is no longer heard in New Jersey, but far to the southward, along the banks of the Potomac, you will find him piping the gloom of the November night with his low and mellowing song.

The woodcock, quail and quail are natives of New Jersey. Also the turkey buzzard, low mellowing song and peewee. People who think that the muskox is the only mammal of New

Jersey know little of our fauna. Hider Haggard, who visited New Jersey in his mind several years ago, said: "As the kernel in Hider Haggard we provided ourselves with a supply of bilious and elephant guns, covered 20 or 30 natives around with crocodones and sharp double-barreled and began to penetrate the jungle. We had not gone far when our supply of bilious run short, and as we began to trek toward the interior my men began to fear that we might perish. At this time my gunbearer, Tippe Tib, Jr., of Woodstock, gave a yelp of delight, for he had struck the spine of a Fulton market wagon. Hunger gave us all energy, and as we continued to trek westward I could see that my men would make a desperate struggle rather than die of starvation.

"Opening a small box of native spoons and giving each a measureful with a leaf of muskox cake and an elephant's tongue on toast, together with the sweetened of a hippopotamus with green peas, our men were soon ready to make an attack on the wagon, which was also trekking westward as the crow flies.

"It was not long till we heard the crushing of twigs in the jungle, and before we camped that night we had bagged the entire delivery wagon, containing real cutlets, skunk and muskox sals, shad, strickles, tenderloins, fillets, rib roasts, spare ribs, soup bones, pig's feet, oysters, spinach and other fauna of New Jersey, and having killed the voracious driver we carried him away to Rahway to act in the capacity of mystery for future years.

Though Mr. Haggard touches very lightly upon the zoology of New Jersey, one can see that the field is very wide indeed, and with his African vocabulary and with a gallon or two of New Jersey spooja I think I could write a very thrilling jungle tale, locating it within 10 miles of New York city. A hectic imagination, some Congo words and the right brand of spooja will make the zoology of New Jersey look like Noah's ark in the midst of a conflagration at sea.

P. S.—I forgot to name the spooja of New Jersey in the list of her zoological wonders. With it the field is enlarged, and one can see crocodiles with red stomachs and unicorns with purple tails—I am told.

And now comes a note from a little boy in the public school of Lorillard, a tobacco center in this state, inquiring about Socrates and how he stood at home after his name had become famous over the world.

Socrates suffered as do most great men who return to their birthplaces and seek to impress their old neighbors. Going back to Athens, where he was called "Sok" even in his full meridian, it is strange that he should have felt down at the heels!

I give below a notice of his lecture, taken from the Athenian Daily Astorian, which, it is said, was followed by the hernicle of Socrates, May 30, 470 B. C.

A rather light audience meandered into and rattled around in the annex of the Acropolis last evening to listen to Socrates, whom we have heard so highly spoken of. Certainly, from what has been said of Sok, especially by our vile contemporary, the Athenian Evening Rubber Stamp, we had reason to believe that Old Sok, the Child Wonder, would paralyze Athens in three rounds with bare knuckles.

Suffice it to say that the audience was bitterly disappointed, and the Athenian Hook and Ladder company and the Corinthian Spirit company No. 3 are left to the tune of about the rest of the annex of the Acropolis and the printing.

Socrates is a greatly overestimated man. He writes fairly well, but as an orator he gives us a violent pain.

In the first place, he is an extremely plain man. He is very cool, stoop, shouldered and baldheaded, with "a mouth like a stab in the dark." How it ever occurred to him to lecture we do not understand. He might well be said to frighten temperate men back into the path of rectitude, but he cannot pronounce a pangyrie—at least he does not pronounce it as we have been accustomed to hearing it pronounced.

On his arrival in town yesterday Socrates became the guest of the Corinthian Spirit company No. 3 and is said to have visited the



WALKING THROUGH NEW JERSEY.

public school and our brewery during the afternoon. He was asked to address the primary classes regarding school work, which he did in rather a clumsy manner. He then took tea with our esteemed fellow townman, Mr. Alex. blabber, who lives back of the Parthenon, and whose announcement regarding his great closing out sale of fall and winter clothing, hats, caps, togs, sandals and general footware may be found elsewhere in this page.

The great man was drunk as an oyster at all these places, barring the public school, pleading fatigue, though it is intimated that he was out late the night before.

The lecture was a rebuke of what Socrates has before written, and the funny parts of it made the audience who the seats loose, and the low, and plunk of the crashing, tear plastered the back of his knickerbocked off legs, after from Jimsonville, by the way.

It is said that Socrates delivered a course of lectures at Athens in one of the previous before because here, and that he offered a prize consisting of a set of dishes and the game of Tiddie-whits to any one who would be willing to stand next to him during the entire course. After some little discussion the prize was awarded to the janitor of the hall.

The progress of this great man came yesterday about an hour or so after he got here himself, and they were about that much behind during the entire lecture. In our opinion, the prize has made Socrates and given him a temporary superiority which he will be well to do to take. His gestures last night were somewhat criticisms and were doubtless intended for some other lecture.

His voice is a little bit thinner than his lecture, and his lower register does not seem to take the thrill off the hall. There are his listeners last night with wet feet, having swept completely bare their corns at his jokes in the early part of the evening, and nothing that he said seemed to cheer them until at the close he struck a little chant of pathos and quit.

Possibly we expected too much of Socrates, as his record of course, was not made as a lecturer, and he therefore cannot expect to take rank alone with some of our local abolitionists, but we had heard so much about this fine man that we think, after all, we value the sentiment of our best people when we say that Socrates is a greatly overestimated and vulgar man whose fame will fade away the only two next night.

Bill Nye

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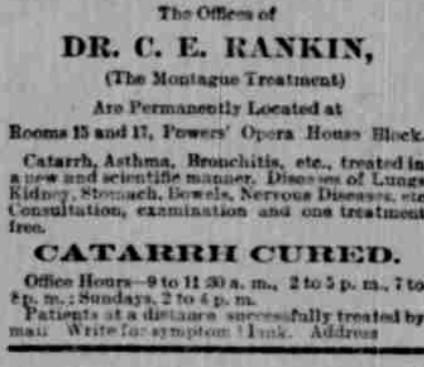
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